

CIRM Awards \$28 Million to Answer Fundamental Questions in Stem Cell Biology

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Los Angeles, Calif., April 29, 2010 – At a meeting at the City of Hope, the governing board of the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine, the state stem cell agency created by Proposition 71, approved funding \$28 million to support 16 Basic Biology II Awards that answer fundamental questions about stem cell biology and one Leadership Award.

The Basic Biology II Awards went to nine non-profit and one for-profit institutions, building on the 12 Basic Biology awards given out in 2009. These awards form the foundation for future translational and clinical advances, enabling the realization of the full potential of human stem cells and reprogrammed cells for therapies and as tools for biomedical innovation.

"Understanding the fundamental questions in stem cell biology and the development of innovative approaches to their differentiation is essential for realizing that goal and bringing new stem cell therapies to patients," said Alan Trounson, CIRM President. "We expect many of these outstanding projects will provide the next platform for application in regenerative medicine and to provide answers that remove road blocks to projects that are already close to the clinic."

The Leadership Awards aid in recruiting early to mid-career stem cell scientists to California institutions by permitting the recipients to pursue high-risk, high payoff, innovative studies that could not be adequately supported by other sources. This is the first cycle, which CIRM will repeat quarterly. The award went to Robert Wechsler-Reya, who would be moving his research in neural development and cancer stem cells from Duke University to the Sanford-Burnham Medical Research Institute in La Jolla. The candidate was given until the end of June to finalize negotiations with the institution.

"The national and international leaders in stem cell biology who we recruit with these Leadership awards will ensure that California has the expertise needed to drive the creation of innovative therapies for patients suffering from a chronic disease or injury," said Robert Klein, chair of the CIRM Governing Board. "Bringing this caliber of scientist to California also creates high paying positions to staff the labs, providing new jobs and tax revenue to the state."

Additional ICOC Business

The board also voted on formal positions regarding three bills that are in various stages of the legislative process in Sacramento.

- The board endorsed AB 1931, introduced by assembly majority leader Alberto Torrico, which would extend the Roman Reed Spinal Cord Injury Research Act of 1999 through January of 2016. The act, which continuously appropriates funds for spinal cord injury research to the University of California, was schedule to expire on January 2011.
- The board endorsed AB 1733, introduced by assembly member Jerry Hill, which would create the Director of California Biotechnology Retention and Recruitment within the Governor's office. The office is intended to foster collaboration between state government, universities and the private sector.
- The board gave permission to staff and its legislative subcommittee to negotiate modifications to SB 1064, introduced by Senator Elaine Alquist. The board backed specific provisions to raise the 50-person cap on CIRM staff and to increase the pay for patient advocate board members serving on the Grants Working Group.

Basic Biology II Awards

Application Number	PI Name	Institution	Total Budget
RB2-01571	Benhur Lee	University of California, Los Angeles	\$1,371,936
RB2-01602	John Rubenstein	University of California, San Francisco	\$1,387,800
RB2-01553	Aaron Hsueh	Stanford University	\$1,432,197
RB2-01530	Ronald Evans	The Salk Institute for Biological Studies	\$1,712,880

RB2-01497	Steven Artandi	Stanford University	\$1,430,908
RB2-01502	Douglas Black	University of California, Los Angeles	\$1,350,994
RB2-01628	Berta Strulovici	iPierian, Inc.	\$1,458,000
RB2-01547	Kun-Liang Guan	University of California, San Diego	\$1,340,565
RB2-01592	Garry Nolan	Stanford University	\$1,447,956
RB2-01496	Aileen Anderson	University of California, Irvine	\$1,284,921
RB2-01629	Marian Waterman	University of California, Irvine	\$1,277,101
RB2-01637	Tony Wyss-Coray	Palo Alto Institute for Research and Education, Inc.	\$1,522,800
RB2-01562	Yong Kim	University of California, Los Angeles	\$1,259,371
RB2-01645	Dong-Er Zhang	University of California, San Diego	\$1,371,540
RB2-01512	Huei-sheng Chen	Sanford-Burnham Medical Research Institute	\$1,587,610
RB2-01567	Eric Kurzrock	University of California, Davis	\$885,600
Total			\$22,357,931

Research Leadership Awards

Application Number	PI Name	Institution	Total Budget
LA1-01747	Robert Wechsler-Reya	Sanford-Burnham Medical Research Institute	\$5,919,616
Total			\$5,919,616

For a list of all institutions funded by CIRM, with funding levels, please visit: </our-funding/funded-institutions>

About CIRM CIRM was established in November 2004 with the passage of Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Act. The statewide ballot measure, which provided \$3 billion in funding for stem cell research at California universities and research institutions, was overwhelmingly approved by voters, and called for the establishment of an entity to make grants and provide loans for stem cell research, research facilities, and other vital research opportunities. To date, the CIRM governing board has approved 345 research, training and facility grants totaling more than \$1 billion, making CIRM the largest source of funding for human embryonic stem cell research in the world. Estimates suggest that these grants already awarded will generate tens of thousands of job-years of employment in the state.

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